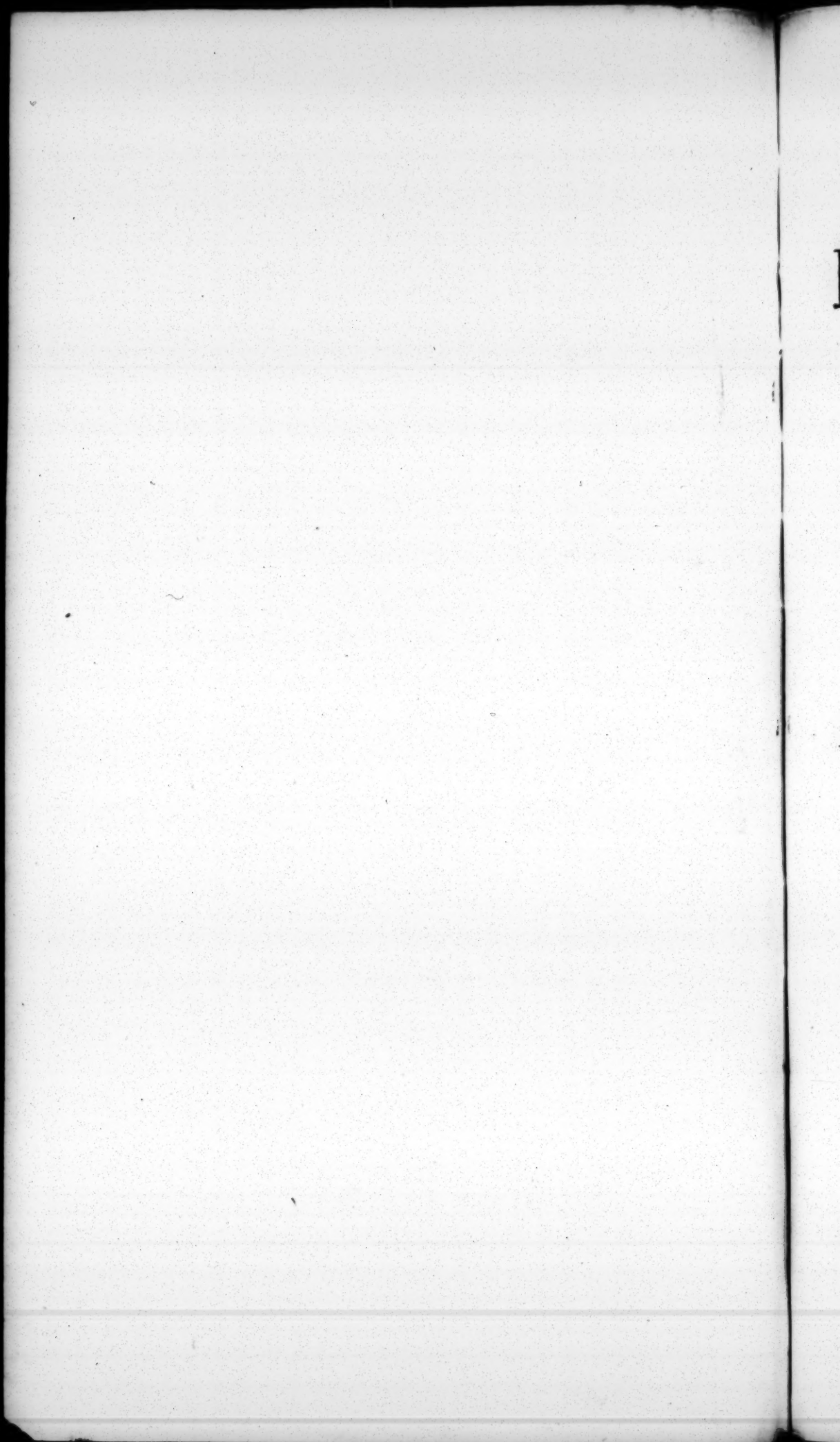

A

Political Lecture,

Occasioned by a late

Political Catechism, &c.

[Price Four-pence.]



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Political Lecture,

Occasioned by a late

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Address'd to the

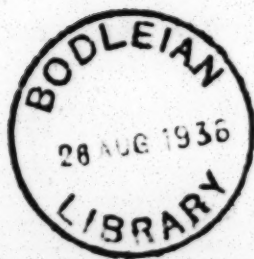
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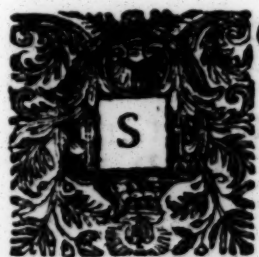




A

POLITICAL LECTURE, &c.

BRETHREN,



O many Attempts have within these few Months been made to induce your Concurrence with an inveterate and traitorous Faction, who are at present endeavouring to overturn the Privileges of *Englishmen*, the Ministry in being, and the present Royal Family on the Throne; that it becomes every honest Member of the *British* State to do his utmost to detect them, either by informing others or inquiring himself. You have not only had Craftsmen scattered throughout *Britain*,
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which openly insisted on Breaches made in the Act of Settlement, declared in them to be the Fundamental Constitution of these Kingdoms and the Measure of the Subjects Obedience; who are consequently, according to his Doctrine, at this juncture loosed from their Allegiance: But you have had also many supernumerary Instructions, Informations, and Manifesto's industriously spread among You for the same blessed Purpose, *viz.* to persuade You to force a new Ministry on your Sovereign, who, if they act, as they have hitherto acted, will be sure to betray *Him*, and to tyrannize over You.

These daring and impudent Attempts have drawn from the Pens of those who desire to do service to the Government, and therein to the People of *Britain*, many Answers; which have, I doubt not, had very good Effects, and prevented those Stirs and Disorders which the Malecontents have so long laboured to excite. But, as their persisting in the same flagitious Practices renders it absolutely necessary for the Friends of the Administration, or of their Country (for they are synonymous Terms) to continue
their

their Labours in the same Way: So I have thought it my Duty to address you on the score of a Pamphlet vehemently extolled by the Party, for no other Reasons that I can discover, but because 'tis full fraught with Blasphemy and Treason.

This Pamphlet bears the Title of *The Free-holders Political Catechism*; and, that it might the better correspond with this Title, we have a jumbled obscure Account of the Constitution, drawing up a Resemblance in Phrase to the Apostles Creed, and a most ingenious and devout Parallel drawn therein between the three Estates of this Realm and the *Holy Trinity*. The reputed Author of this celebrated Piece is a learned Physician, remarkable for having made many Attempts to reach Wit without having ever succeeded to say the Truth: The present Performance looks like a Piece of Revenge in the way of his Profession; for, as few, even of his own Party, care to trust him with their Bodies; so the Doctor, to be even with them, has done all in his Power to poison their Minds and the Minds of the whole Nation.

I do not intend to run through the whole of this Political Catechism; be-

cause the Refutation of the Errors, the pointing out the Absurdities, and the displaying those traitorous Positions which are included therein, would take too much time, and perhaps perplex you too much: However, I promise, if called upon, to support all I have said; and in the mean time, to furnish an Antidote for preventing the most dangerous Consequences of the Doctor's venomous Infusion, I shall divide the Remainder of this Discourse into three Parts.

First, I shall consider the Meaning of the Word LIBERTY, and what is truly understood by it under Regular Governments however Instituted or Conducted.

Secondly, I shall explain the Nature of our CONSTITUTION, and the Obedience which is thereby due to the present Government.

Thirdly, I shall examine the present Outcries about CORRUPTION, and endeavour to shew their true Source and their proper Remedy.

First then, The Author of the Catechism has confounded his Readers, in respect to Liberty; for he has industriously
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confused that wild untutor'd Condition, in which a Man would find himself, if his Parents should afford him Nutriment only and not Education, with that Freedom which remains to each Individual after submitting to Government and becoming a Member of Society. Now, whether this natural Liberty be a Blessing, or no, let any civilized Person judge. Would any *Englishmen* have changed his Condition with *Peter* the wild Boy? What Satisfaction can a reasonable Man imagine there is in running thro' Woods, munching Roots, and sleeping in Caves? yet we know that those who are in Possession of this mighty Jewel reap from it no other Benefits than these. Natural Liberty then has no vast Advantage.

Had this wise and learned Person considered what is to be met with in Scripture on this Head, I fancy he would have omitted all mention of natural Liberty in his System of Theological Politics; for he would have known, that the inspired Writers speak of it only as the Corruption of human Nature, as an impetuous Desire after Evil, and as a Thing, which all Laws, whether Human or Divine, are calculated to curb. The Apostle *Peter*, in his second general Epistle,
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mentions among other Heretics, *i. e.* Men holding false Doctrines dangerous to Salvation, some, who, like our Author, had propagated new and unchristian Notions on this Head; but then hear what that great Apostle says of them: *While they promise them Liberty, they are themselves the Servants of Corruption.*

Yet thus far we agree with the Catechist, that there is a Degree of Liberty desirable above all things; and this Liberty we shall next endeavour to define. It is the Power of doing any thing we think fit, which is neither hurtful to our selves or to others. I can by no means approve of running into Philosophical Enquiries in Discourses of this Nature; and therefore, without multiplying Words, or having recourse to the Principles of the *Hobbiſts*, I shall go on to delineate the Ends for which this kind of Liberty is desired; the Motives on which some have attempted to destroy it; and finally, the Methods by which it has been and still is maintained and kept up amongst us in the plainest Terms possible.

Society is supported by Rewards and Punishments; the first inclines us to do, and the other deters us from doing: Now the

the Rule by which these ought to be settled, is the Public Good. If therefore the Laws in any State be conformable to this Standard, then those who live under them enjoy Liberty and are free; that is, they are not hindered from doing any thing which may be advantageous to themselves. But Tyranny abolishes, wherever it is set up, all Regard to Public Good, and, in the room thereof, substitutes the Support of it self; and consequently, the Laws of Tyrants infringe Liberty, that is, they hinder Men from doing what may be beneficial to themselves and to their Country, in order to preserve that private substituted Interest of those who Tyrannize. But it has been the Happiness of our Fore-fathers, that they had a true Taste of Liberty, and that by degrees they procured it by reducing the Laws as near as possible to the proper Rule, which in early Ages had very different Tendencies, and laid the Body of the People under unequitable Restraints, or, in other Words, trespassed on their Freedom. All rational Creatures therefore will desire this kind of Liberty. When Men so far deviate from Reason, as to prefer their private Good, that is, the Gratification of present Passions to the Weal Public; then they will attempt to
destroy

destroy Liberty, which in *Britain* has been, and is still, prevented by lodging the Legislative Power, whereby Liberty only can be injured, so, as that the People have a Share therein; that is, those, who are concerned in keeping Liberty, are the only Persons who can destroy it. From whence, I think, we may fairly infer, that the *British* Liberty is and will be safe, so long as a Share of the Legislature is held by the Representatives of the People. *Secondly*, I am to speak of the Nature of our CONSTITUTION, which of late Years has been so often canvassed, that, to avoid, as far as I may, saying what has been already said, I will content my self with observing, that the great Excellence thereof is this: We enjoy from it the Advantages of Monarchical, Aristocratical and Democratical Government, at the same time that we avoid those Evils to which each of them is liable, and this by the wise Contrivance of that Ballance which by our CONSTITUTION is settled amongst them. Now those Evils, to which the two last mentioned Forms of Government are most exposed, and have generally subverted them, are the Enmity of the Governed towards those who Govern, and the Dread the latter are under of being supplanted by the former:

mer: Or in other Words; The Nobles in Aristocracies aim at keeping the People unreasonably under, and the People in Democracies continually hate and maltreat the Nobility; and both from the same Principle. But in our Government, neither the Nobility nor the People have the Power of nominating the Ministry, *i. e.* those who have the Executive Power in their Hands; but that is lodged solely in the Prince, who may delegate his Authority to whom he pleases; and if they fail in their Duty, they are punishable by the Laws, which are the Rules by which they ought to guide themselves: And I am firmly perswaded, that nothing has contributed so much to maintaining our Liberties, as this Power of the King in making choice of his Ministers; in as much as that Emulation and Strife, which, as we have observed, subsist among the People under other Governments, are blunted thereby; and so the Body of the Nation is left without Jealousies or Prejudices against this or that Order of Men, and have nothing to do but to observe whither those in the Administration perform their Offices in a manner agreeable to LAW.

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But, should the Schemes of the present Malecontents succeed, they will thereby overturn all these Advantages, and that for ever: The Ministry will no longer be chosen by the King, but the prevailing Faction will give Law to Him, and their Heads will become his Ministers; or they will prescribe to such as they permit Him to make use of. It was a dangerous and traiterous Position maintained by the Creatures of the late King *James*, That the Laws were the King's Laws, *i. e.* to be moulded, construed, or suspended as he thought proper. And the modern Doctrine, of the Ministers being the Ministers or the Servants of the People, *i. e.* to be accountable to, and removeable at their Pleasure, is as dangerous an Assertion, and as destructive of our Constitution; for it has a directed Tendency to keep the Nation everlastingly divided and to render the Kingly Office weak and insignificant.

It is indeed amazing, that the People, during the Stirs kept up for the seven Years last past, should not have discovered this; nay, that they should not have seen farther, and have been convinced that those who are out of Power, and consequently are discontented, make
 them

them their Tools at present, in order to accomplish such a Change as may serve their Purpose ; and that, if once that were effected, they in a short Space would fall into the Hands of new Malecontents, who by fair Words and foul would draw them into the same Removing Project, by making them believe it their Interest to turn those out they had with so great Pains put in : So that Faction and Discord must be perpetuated, or at least subsist till the Frame of our Government be shaken to Pieces. How much more reasonable would it be for the Nation to remain quiet and united, ready to crush any offending Minister, but without assuming a Power which it is their greatest Blessing they want, and which they never can assume without destroying our present excellent CONSTITUTION.

We are now arrived at our last Head, *viz.* the Danger of Corruption, its Cause and Cure. And here I cannot help wondring at the Impudence of a Faction railing at an Implement ever in their Hands. Do the Malecontents ever stick at any CORRUPTION, great or small, to carry a Point ? Was it not Corruption with a small Dash of Perjury that procured Mr. F—, within these few Months,

Leave to travel to *Bristol* on the Business of the Craftsmen? Was the late Entertainment in the Borough, by one who is to be a Candidate on the Country Interest, no Instance of Corruption? Or were the Dishes as infamous as the red Pottage, for which *Esau* sold his Birth-right? What Prodigies in Assurance are our modern Patriots! Continually intriguing, promising and caballing, to attain Power; and at the same time railing with a loud Voice at the Intrigues, Promises and Cabals of Men in Power: Marvelling at the stupendious Wickedness of those, who, by crossing their Schemes, prevent their being supplanted; and surprized at the Remove of Ministers, who had been plotting to remove other Ministers, not only without their Sovereign's Consent or Knowledge, but against his express Commands. Are not these most eminently virtuous Persons? And ought we not to have a very bad Opinion of those, who are so unjust as not to yield them up their Places?

As the Source of Corruption the Characterist names Luxury, and in this I think is more in the right than in most other things he asserts; but how is the Ministry or the Court chargeable with the introducing,

roducing, countenancing or supporting it? I will venture to affirm, that Oeconomy and decent Splendor was never so well observed in any *English* Court, as they are in the present; never were the Affairs of the Household so exactly regulated, and Money so easily and so duly paid, as it now is: Why then is the Court upbraided with Luxury? which, it is evident, reigns every where but there. Will the boldest of the modern Libellers take upon him to say, that those, who set up for the Heads of the Malecontents, are Persons who pay better, or live more within Bounds, than those who are in Power do? I am sure they cannot: Why then must the Administration be traduced for the Follies of the People?

But might not Luxury be restrained by wholesome Laws? Undoubtedly it might. The difficulty is to obtain those Laws. The Malecontents will never propose them, for fear of lessening their Interest; since where Luxury is universal, to be the Enemy of Luxury, or to endeavour to stop its Career, is to draw upon ye the Hatred of the People. Those, who are Friends to Men in Power, are discouraged from this very Consideration, and from the Knowledge they have of that Facility

Facility, with which their Enemies might, in such a Case, inflame the Minds of the Populace. The late Excise-Bill (as they call it) is the clearest Proof of this. For nothing more was desired thereby, than to have Duties, already imposed, duly collected; and this on two Commodities, which no Man can deny to be luxurious in their Nature, and very little necessary to the Inhabitants of this Country. And yet what a Flame did this produce! Men clamoured with greater Vehemence against an Expedient contrived to prevent their being cheated, than they would have done against the most flagrant Attempt to impoverish and oppress them; had it been contrived by Men in their Favour. The best Schemes have been formed, and the most beneficial Designs executed, by what the Malecontents stile the Party of the Court. Have not they for many Years preserved to us Peace, when the opposing Faction would have run us into a War with any body, if by that Means they could have removed the Ministry? Have not the same Party done the most eminent Service in the last Session to the *British Colonies in the West Indies*? Have they not complied with, and promoted, all the Projects that have been formed to render
Rivers

Rivers navigable, &c? and have they not brought them to bear, even against the strenuous Opposition of such as value themselves— with what Reason let the World judge— on the Title of the COUNTRY PARTY?

Would these sage and virtuous Persons put a Stop to this Torrent of Luxury and Corruption, let them cease to live luxuriously and to corrupt their Countrymen themselves. 'Tis a known Rule, *Example does more than Precept*: Let them harangue, exhort and instruct Freeholders and Burgesses, instead of treating them, and we may suppose they mean as they speak: But while they act in the manner they do; while they are guilty of all they condemn; while they covet that Power they malign, and promise great things to their Dependants, when great Things are theirs to give; no Man in his Senses but must see, despise and detest their Hypocrisy.

Thus, my Friends and Fellow-Subjects, you see, that all that Liberty, which a just and honest Man would desire, is as fully in your Power to enjoy as you can wish; That the present Government has as much Right to your Obedience and good Wishes, as any Government possibly

can have ; That Luxury and Corruption are unjustly charged on the Administration ; and I hope the latter is by the Faction as unjustly imputed to you ; and therefore, I will conclude this Discourse with the Advice of the wisest of Men, speaking by the Spirit of God, *If thou hast done foolishly in lifting up thy self, or if thou hast thought Evil, lay thy Hand upon thy Mouth : Fear God, Honour the King, have nothing to do with them that are subject to Change, for their Destruction cometh suddenly.*

F I N I S.



